DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 466 530 SO 033 932

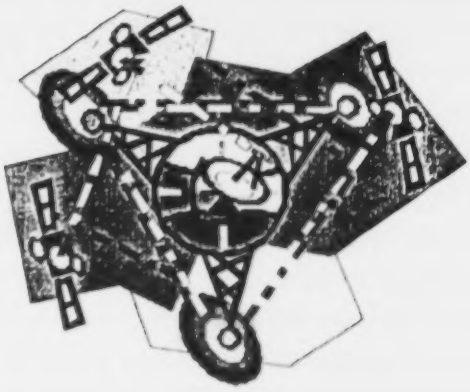
AUTHOR	White, Caroline
TITLE	Building Cross-Cultural Bridges--Cultural Analysis of Critical Incidents.
PUB DATE	2000-04-00
NOTE	36p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Classroom Techniques; Conflict Resolution; *Critical Incidents Method; *Cross Cultural Training; *Cultural Context; *Cultural Pluralism; Global Approach; Higher Education; *Intercultural Communication; Social Sciences
IDENTIFIERS	Analytic Approach; Concept Identification

ABSTRACT

Culture forms the basis for cross-cultural awareness and understanding. The initial response to a new culture is to find it fascinating, exotic, and thrilling. Although, to function in a new cultural environment, and become aware of deep cultural patterns people need time, research, and investigation. Dealing with a new culture, people need a multicultural perspective to maintain their own identity, while interacting successfully with persons within other cultural frameworks. Cultural diversity exists among workers and clients in the United States and among international business partners and clients. Cross-cultural analytical tools help people cut through cultural barriers and improve communication. These units of study use a critical incident format to be able to state a conflict situation in a clear, concise, objective, and non-judgmental manner. The units apply self-reference criteria in a four-step conflict resolution approach to achieve a desired outcome. Students practice applying three cross-cultural analytical tools to address conflict situations, which help them build interpersonal relations with persons from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The 15 units include: (1) "Culture"; (2) "Cultural Variables Ten Elements and Their Aspects"; (3) "Cultural Analysis of Critical Incidents"; (4) "Cultural Variables Practice" (in Spanish; not included); (5) "Hispanic Cultural Concepts" (in Spanish; not included); (6) "Entrance into an International Market"; (7) "Types of Firms"; (8) "Management"; (9) "Banking and Accounting"; (1) "The Office"; (11) "Personnel and Labor Relations"; (12) "Goods and Services"; (13) "Marketing"; (14) "Finances"; and (15) "Import and Export." Includes extensive tables. (BT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 466 530



Building Cross-Cultural Bridges--

Cultural Analysis of Critical Incidents

Caroline White
Associate Professor of Spanish
#4260, 2004 Randolph Avenue
The College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN 55105
E-mail <cawhite@stkate.edu
Telephone 651.690.6821

April 2000

SO 033 932

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
C. White
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Building Cross-Cultural Bridges:

Cultural Analysis of Critical Incidents

Caroline White, Associate Professor of Spanish
The College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN 55105
April 2000

Unit 1 Culture

Unit 2 Cultural Variables -- Ten Elements And Their Aspects

Unit 3 Cultural Analysis of Critical Incidents

Unit 4 Cultural Variables Practice (in Spanish; not included)

Unit 5 Hispanic Cultural Concepts (in Spanish; not included)

Critical Incidents

6 Entrance into an international market

7 Types of firms

8 Management

9 Banking and accounting

10 The Office

11 Personnel and labor relations

12 Goods and services

13 Marketing

14 Finances

15 Import and Export

References

Culture defines our ethnic identity and determines our success within our own environment. Once we move outside of our culture we must open our responses to the new culture if we are to achieve success in our communication and interpersonal relations. Culture forms the basis for cross-cultural awareness and understanding.

(Table 1-1 Culture Concepts)

Culture determines our behavior, customs, thoughts, attitudes, beliefs and values representative of the society in which we live. In our own environment, our culture is superior because it enables us to function with greater ease. Such a feeling of superiority gives us an ethnocentric view in which we believe in our own culture and reject others different from our own. Our initial response to a new culture is to find it fascinating, exotic, thrilling. We may understand surface culture, behavior patterns visible to an observer, but we are unable to decifer the deep invisible cultural patterns, basic to decisions.This deep culture forms the attitudes, beliefs and values of a people. We need time, research, and investigation to become aware of these deep cultural patterns in order to function adequately in a new cultural environment.Constantly responding to a new environment wears us down. Tired from the bombardment of new stimuli to interpret, we begin to respond negatively to cultural differences.We may reject the new culture, withdraw from it, or attempt to emulate it. These negative reactions I summarize as "fight, flight, or go native." All three produce negative results. In a new culture we need a multicultural perspective. We need to maintain our own identity yet at the same time we must interact successfully with persons within their cultural framework. We need to know how our ethnic identity affects cross-cultural communication.

Cultural diversity exists among workers and clients in the United States and among international business partners and clients. Cross-cultural analytical tools can help us to cut through cross-cultural barriers and improve communication. Each situation is unique therefore our analysis must be unique as well. Personal and cultural dynamics change. We must adapt to each change.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Cultural diversity requires a paradigm shift if we are to achieve our objectives. Even when others communicate clearly in English, we cannot assume that they will adapt to our cultural norms. We will examine cross-cultural variables to seek out a person's preferred cultural patterns. We will learn a critical incident format so that we can state a conflict situation in a clear, concise, open, objective and non judgmental manner. We will apply self-reference criteria in a four-step conflict resolution approach for the purpose of achieving a desired outcome. Effective communication depends upon cultural understanding. In the past many have functioned successfully with a domestic, ethnocentric paradigm. It serves well in their own cultural environment. But to achieve success in a global, culturally diverse environment we need to shift toward a new multicultural paradigm. We need to improve our cultural communication.

(Table 1-2 Domestic and Global Paradigms)

The Chinese character for opportunity is the same as for crisis. It depicts a person at the top of a mountain. It gives us insight into Chinese culture. Chinese flow with the environment. They do not attempt to control external forces or change circumstances. An American doing business with a Chinese illustrates this cultural difference. The American wants to arrive at product and purchase terms as soon as possible, to get a signed contract. The American feels the need for action to try to close the deal. The Chinese seller realizes by his doing nothing the American will concede terms. An American traveling down river rapids tries to direct the craft. A Chinese traveling along the same rapids realizes their potential and power and goes with the flow. Chinese move in harmony with their environment while Americans want to feel in control.

You will practice applying three cross-cultural analytical tools to address conflict situations. These will help you build interpersonal relations with persons from diverse backgrounds and cultures. In the decision-making process each person brings a unique cultural perspective. You will learn to understand and to respond to another's unique cultural perspective.

Table 1-1 Culture Concepts

Concept	Definition
Culture Naked we arrive but we leave not naked. Invisible to us yet at times visible to others we carry with us our own culture.	Our habits, customs, thoughts, attitudes, beliefs and values represent the society in which we live.
Ethnocentrism We are superior to others because -- -	Belief our culture is superior to other cultures which function differently than our own.
Initial response to a new culture Fascinating, thrilling, different	Our first experiences to a new culture are often very positive.
Cultural Shock When we live in a different cultural environment than our own, the honeymoon soon is over.	An accumulation of new cultural experiences overwhelms us. We cannot function.We view the new culture negatively. The result is a complete breakdown in the new culture.
Negative reactions to a new culture How do you react to differences? Fight, flight, or go native?	To fight against the new, not to accept. To escape the new; to separate self. To "become native", to copy the new.
Multiculturalism We feel open to cultural differences.	Through experiences with other cultures we are more tolerant of them. We are better prepared, more sensitive, patient and flexible when we experience a new culture..

Table 1-2 Domestic and Global Paradigms

A person when using an Ethnocentric Paradigm	A person when using a Multicultural Paradigm
• works from a narrow perspective.	• seeks a larger perspective.
• aims for specialized expertise.	• aims for cross-functional expertise.
• thinks in a linear, analytical manner.	• thinks in a non-linear, holistic manner.
• focuses on a single task.	• prefers a multi-focus orientation.
• defines roles and structure.	• uses process rather than structure.
• develops individual competencies.	• values a diverse team approach
• views change as a negative.	• views change as synergistic, an energy.
• attempts to prevent conflict.	• views conflict as opportunity.
• develops a win-lose mindset.	• balances conflict for a win-win mindset.

For discussion

What is culture?
How does an ethnocentric view affect communication?
How might we react to another culture?
Comment on various cultural influences among persons you know.
How can we better communicate with other cultures?

Ten Cultural Variable Elements And Their Aspects

In our culture each of us responds to cultural variables in a unique manner depending upon our orientation to various social groups. The variables, first proposed by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) in Variations in Value Orientations and adapted by Brake (1995) in Doing Business Internationally, are environment, time, action / essence, communication, space, power, individualism / collectivism, competition / cooperation, structure, and mode of thinking. Each divides into behavioral aspects. Preferred cultural orientation may vary according to circumstances. For example a person may respond in a different manner in the home environment than in the work environment.

(Table 2-1 Cultural elements & aspects)

Because of the interconnected nature of the ten cultural variables, we can focus on environment and power and the other eight variables. A person who feels in control of the environment most likely views time as fixed, space as private, structure as flexible, and thinking as inductive. A person who feels controlled by environment most likely views time as fluid, space as public, structure as ordered, and thinking as deductive.

A person who views the power relationship in terms of equality most likely responds with a need for action. Communication is direct, informal,. Words carry the meaning rather than the context, the circumstances. Individualism and competition prevail. A person who views the power relationship in terms of authority most likely views the essence or being as essential rather than action. Communication is indirect and formal. In high context the circumstances and behavior carry the message rather than the words. Such a message based upon high context requires the ability to understand what is transpiring beyond verbal communication.

The following chart relates Environment and Power to cultural elements and aspects:

Environment		Control	Controlled
	Time	Fixed	Fluid
	Space	Private	Public
	Structure	Flexible	Order
	Thinking	Inductive	Deductive
		Lineal	Sistemic
Power		Equality	Authority
	Action	To do	To be
	Communication	Direct	Indirect
		Informal	Formal
		Low Context	High Context
	"I" / "we"	Individualism	Collectivism
		Competition	Cooperation

Another key variable is communication style, whether direct or indirect, informal or formal, in low context or high context? An awareness of these variables, communication, environment and power, helps us to create a win-win response, to adapt to differences.

We can compare cultures along a cultural aspects line continuum for each variable. Compare your culture with another culture with which you are familiar, for example Anglo with Latino cultures. Differences and similarities affect communication. When distance separates two cultures consider how your adapting may bridge these differences to achieve your objective. (Table 2-2 Variable Cultural Elements Line Continuum for Aspects)

Return to the American buyer and the Chinese seller. What are differences? Does the American try to control? To communcate directly? To manage time? Does the Chinese flow with the circumstances? Bide time? Wait to communicate? They are at opposite ends of the spectrum in environment, power, and communication styles.

Table 2-1 Cultural elements and their aspects

Instructions: Select a response from each grouping.

Cultural elements and their aspects	How might you respond? Your preferred orientation?
1. Environment	
Control	Yes, one can move mountains.
Harmony	We walk along the mountain paths in peace and oneness.
Controlled, destiny	No way can we move a chain of mountains.
2. Time	
Single focus	I finish one thing and then another.
Multiple focuses	I can respond to several things at the same time.
Fixed, lineal time	I maintain a daily schedule on my calendar.
Fluid, spiral time	I do various activities during a day. Schedules restrict.
Future	I frequently think about my future plans.
Present	I live for the moment. This is all we have.
Past	Our present is guided by our past.
3. Action / Essence	To be or to do – is that the question?
To do	Action is necessary. I need to do something.
To be	Because you are the authority you have my loyalty.
4. Communication	Even though unaware, we always are communicating.
Direct	Explain the problem so we can resolve it.
Indirect	Let's talk about how work is proceeding.
Low Context	These points should convince you about the product.
High Context	At this special event we view products nearby.
Informal	Hi, Jim. Good to see you. How are things with you?
Formal	Engineer Vega, it is a pleasure to see you today.
5. Space	
Private	Back off, you are WAY TOO CLOSE.
Public	I need to be close enough to touch while I talk to you.
6. Power	
Equality	We are equals in needing to prove ourselves.
Authority	Your title and authority communicates your worth.
7. Individualism/ Collectivism	
"I"	I am responsible for my successes and failures.
"We"	To succeed we work together.
8. Competition / Cooperation	
To become number one	I want to be the one who is best.
To form part of a group	We are colleagues and cooperate in all we do.
9. Structure	
Flexibility	I think in my own future; my job might end any time.
Order	In exchange for loyalty I receive security in my job.
10. Thinking	
Inductive	To reach a conclusion I investigate and observe.
Deductive	Theories help to understand what happens.
Lineal	I search for the cause based on the effect.
Sistemic	The total is more than the parts. View the whole.

Table 2-2 Variable Cultural Elements Line Continuum for Aspects

Variable Cultural Elements Line Continuum for Aspects

Mark your opinion for preferred orientation. "S" Anglo Saxon (S) / "L" Latino.

1. Environment

Control — Harmony — Controlled

2. Time

Single focus — Multiple focuses

Fixed, lineal time — Fluid, spiral time

Future — Present — Past

3. Action / Essence

To do — To be

4. Communication

Direct — Indirect

Low Context — High Context

Informal — Formal

5. Space

Private — Public

6. Power

Equality — Hierarchy

7. Individualism / Collectivism

"I" — "We"

8.Competition / Cooperation

To be number one — To form part of a group

9. Structure

Flexibility — Order

10. Thinking

Inductive — Deductive

Lineal — Sistemic

Instructions:

Summarize your observations regarding Anglo and Latino cultural orientations.

Cross-Cultural Critical Incidents

The cross-cultural critical incident format provides a means to analyze a conflict situation in a thorough, objective manner. When something unexpected causing conflict occurs and you are not sure why, you need an analytical process to describe the situation. or criticize. Often conflict involves invisible deep culture, which determines decisions. To become familiar with the critical incident format, read "Why no one ate cake" in Table 3-1. (Table 3-1 "Why no one ate cake" Critical Incident)

Critical Incident Characteristics

When you write a critical incident include all details and information.

- Explain the incident in one page.
- Describe the incident in an objective manner, without criticism or judgment.
- Determine what occurred most appropriate for your analysis.
- Recognize that not all what occurs is relevant for understanding the situation.
- Come to a tentative conclusion on influencing attitudes, beliefs, values.

For your analysis of incidents refer to Table 3-2.

(Table 3-2 Critical Incident Characteristics)

Return to the American and Chinese situation; write a critical incident and analyze it. Have you kept the description brief, yet complete, objective not subjective? Did you include all possibilities in your analysis? Did you think about deep culture influencing the incident? Have you reached the most probable cause for differences? Have you thought of resolution? Have you suggested to the American a slower process to arrive at the terms of a contract? Have you suggested establishing a relationship first, to take time to understand and to appreciate the Chinese person and circumstances? Once a long term relationship develops the terms of an agreement and future agreements will flow more easily.

Self-Reference Criteria (SRC) Schema

The third and final cross-cultural analytical tool, a self-reference criteria (SRC) schema, addresses critical cultural conflict to determine how to reach a desired outcome. With this SRC schema, using the critical incident format, you analyze the situation in terms of the ten cultural variables. I have adapted the self reference to a general reference format.

(Table 3-3 Self Reference and General Reference Schema)

Before you proceed with the four analytical steps state clearly the desired outcome in concrete, measurable terms. This helps you to identify and resolve whatever cultural elements impinge on reaching this objective. Once you have the objective stated, proceed with these four steps.

Step One What cultural aspects of yours (Anglo-Saxon) are influencing the situation?

Step Two What cultural aspects of the other (Latino) are influencing the situation?

Step Three What cultural complication exists?

Step Four How might you resolve the complication to reach your business objective?

Conclusion

Cultural diversity is the norm rather than the exception. Effective communication among cultures requires breaking through barriers impeding cultural understanding. Following are incidents in which you can practice applying the three cross-cultural analytical tools. Think of the ten cultural variables. State the situation using the critical incident format. Apply the cross-cultural general reference criteria to the incident. With these tools you can successfully identify reasons for cross-cultural conflict and think of a way to resolve the conflict. Through quality communication you can achieve your desired objectives. Your practice enables you to apply them to future cultural conflict situations. You move away from an ethnocentered, domestic paradigm toward a multicultural, global paradigm.

Table 3-1 "Why no one ate cake" Critical Incident Read and analyze this incident.

A group of French student interns studying international business were attending a going away celebration after completing internships with companies in the United States. They had just finished dinner and met to say goodbye to persons with whom they worked. A table with food and drinks contained wine, soft drinks, coffee, pieces of fruit, and small individual cakes as well as napkins, small plates and toothpicks for the fruit.

The vice president of the college greeted all and asked them to serve themselves. Some took coffee and others wine. No one took a little cake. The vice president then took the large platter with the cakes around to the guests. None of the French took one.Only a few from the United States took one. They picked the cake up in their hands to eat them. Most of the cakes remained on the platter.

In your analysis think of all possibilites why no one ate cake. Select the most appropriate; explain.

1. Generally French prefer only coffee after dinner.
2. For dessert the French prefer fruit.
3. They were not hungry since they had just eaten.
3. It is too hard to eat and drink and to hold a glass and plate at the same time.
5. The French use forks to eat cake. With no forks available they had no means to eat it.

Analysis of each idea -- why no one ate cake

1. French drink coffee after dinner but for dessert?
2. Correct, fruit is a typical dessert. Is there a better reason?
3. We don't know if they were no longer hungry.
3. True. Eating and drinking, holding glass and plate while talking is hard to do at the same time.

*5. This seems the best reason. The French use forks to eat cake. Even fruit is often eaten with knife and fork. Without forks available they would not accept a cake to eat. To ask for a fork would be impolite, so no one accepted a cake in their fingers.

Note that various reasons are possible. You may need to analyze an incident several times.

Topic and description of cultural incidents

Table 3-2 Critical Incident Format Characteristics

A critical incident deals with a conflict situation. Write down all details and information you have for the purpose of analyzing and resolving if possible the conflict.
These characterize a well-written critical incident.

- Describe the incident in one page. Write complete, clear, concise ideas.
- Keep your statements objective; avoid criticism or judgment
- Include all specific details--Who? What? Where? When? Why?
- Tell the circumstances, persons, relationships, your role; what you did.
- Write an analysis listing all possible reasons for what occurred.
- Recognize that not all what occurs is relevant to understanding.
- Come to a tentative conclusion about the influencing cultural aspects.

What might you do to resolve the conflict?

How might you change in the future to prevent the conflict?

Table 3-3 Self Reference and General Reference Schema for Cultural Analysis
Self Reference Analysis

- What is the desired outcome?

Which cultural aspects of yours are influencing the situation?
Which cultural aspects of the other person are influencing?
What cultural self reference is the cause of the complication?
How can you change it to reach your desired outcome?

General Reference Cultural Contrast

Each situation is unique; maintain openness and flexibility.

What is the desired outcome?

Which Anglo cultural aspects are influencing the situation?

Which Latino cultural aspects are influencing the situation?

What cultural complication exists?

Can it be resolved to reach the desired outcome?

Refer to aspects of cultural elements related to Environment and to Power

List cultural concepts which relate to the situation.

This unit on Cultural Variables Practice is in La cultura y los casos comerciales. It is not included here since an English version does not exist at the present time.

This unit on Hispanic Cultural Concepts is in La cultura y los casos comerciales. It is not included here since an English version does not exist at the present time.

Unit 6 International Market Critical Incident

At an international conference Tecno's top executive meets Raúl Torres, president of a business in Argentina. Tecno specializes in computer systems for small businesses. RT expresses interest in such a system. Because Tecno is seeking to extend operations, their managers decide to send their Marketing director, Mary Jones, to Buenos Aires with their latest computer model for the purpose of demonstration and to try to get a signed contract.

This is MJ's first business trip abroad but she is confident in her ability to communicate in Spanish. She knows that their product is one of the best offered at this time for a competitive price. The secretary makes all the arrangements for the trip and for her meeting with the company president in Buenos Aires.

MJ has trouble getting through customs. They require duty on the computer she is bringing in. She feels tired after the long trip. She runs into a problem getting a taxi to her hotel since it appears taxi drivers are on strike and she did not know until her arrival. Finally she gets to the Hilton and is pleased with her room.

The next day she calls Raúl Torres office to confirm their meeting. She leaves the hotel with sufficient time. When she arrives RT is not in. His secretary offers her coffee. After a half hour MJ does not know if she should wait longer or return at a better time. Her plans are to stay only three days. Before her return she hopes for a signed contract. RT arrives and greets her with a handshake. He invites her in his office and to sit down.

RT welcomes her to the city and asks about her flight and the hotel. MJ responds that the long trip tired her out and that the hotel is wonderful. He tells her how pleased they are for her visit to talk to them. He plans to give her a tour of the city and at the same time visit the branches nearby to introduce her to the branch managers.

She tells him it would be easier to request the branch managers to meet them here at the main office so she can demonstrate the computer to all of them together. She asks if he could contact them and bring them for the demo.

He tells her he thinks it an excellent idea to see the product, but he cannot tell her for certain whether any of the managers can come to the downtown office. He will ask his secretary to call and ask them.

MJ says she has a catalog of their products and a price list. She explains it is in English until they have more Spanish-speaking clients. She tells him about the problem getting through customs. She cannot understand why they would not be interested in making international business transactons easier

RT apologizes for the difficulty she had with customs and tells her if they had known she was bringing a demo computer they could have taken care of all the paperwork

for customs beforehand. MJ suggests she can demonstrate the computer for him while they await the others. RT comments it is an excellent model but it appears not to use the metric system.

MJ explains they can adapt the model to meet RT's needs.

He notes the instruction manual is complicated and in English. He wonders how the employees can learn to use it.

MJ assures him it is easy. She or another can demonstrate it to all employees. She asks if he would like to examine their catalog and the price list. She notes these are the best prices on the best system and that it will serve them well.

He thanks her and invites her to join him for lunch with several colleagues. She says she does not want to interrupt his schedule and meetings and that she plans to go back to her hotel for a rest before returning to his office later when the branch managers come. That way she says he has time to look over everything and once she returns they can talk about a purchase agreement.

RT says he is sorry she cannot go to lunch with him. He notes the prices are in dollars and wonders if the sale can be stated in Argentine pesos instead.

MJ says she thinks it will be easy to put the prices in pesos and that she will check on the current exchange rate before writing up the contract for him in pesos. She asks his opinion of the computer. RT tells her it is an excellent one and that they can continue their conversation later on.

MJ says she is happy he is interested in their product and will await his call for setting up their next meeting with the branch managers. She says she plan to return to the United States in three days but believes that gives them sufficent time. RT says he is pleased to meet her and that he will see her later.

MJ waits for a call. Finally she phones the company. The secretary says so far she has not found a convenient date to meet with the branch managers. MJ returns to the U.S. without meeting with them and without a sale.

Unit 7 Businesses Critical Incident

A Spanish business, Empresa Valle de la Rioja, has three partners. Because of the fame of its wine, they have just begun to export wine. For several generations they have produced and marketed Rioja wine.

The majority of the people in the villages where they have their business have worked for them for generations as well. They have established distributors throughout Spain. They send out their publicity through their distributors who share it with acquaintances in their regions. Recently the top executives have made new contacts during their business trips abroad. One is with the president of a large California wine business which has taken special interest in their wine.

Barry Tops, representative from

Napa Wine of California, goes to Spain with the objective of acquiring this Spanish wine company. He talks to one of the partners, Dario Promesa, to convince him of the acquisition. BT says since DP already knows Napa Wine Co. well that he is ready to offer their wine company a fantasticm opportunity to become incorporated and form part of the Napa Wine Company International. This will extend markets and improve publicity with the result of increased earnings and reduced expenses. The California home office will be able to direct international operations and the three partners in Spain will continue with production to maintain the high quality for which their wine is known throughout the world.

DP agrees that BT's company is well known and is very large. He agrees that he understands the advantages BT explained of forming part of a larger firm as a corporation rather than with partners. He agrees to talk to the other partners and to consider BT's proposal. He reiterates that this arrangement would mean that they would keep control of production. He says that they will need time to think about the idea.

Unit 8A Management Critical Incident

Tom Davis, a North American, is talking to Ramón García, a Mexican, about the adminstrative structure for a new Tijuana branch to assemble television sets for sale in the United States.

TD wants the best workers for a reasonable price. He wants to motivate them to work rapidly yet maintain quality.

RG has read his reports and knows TD is an excellent production manager. He expresses his willingness to work with TD.

TD wants to find the workers and offer an appropriate salary for the area.

RG tells about his colleagues in the city who have excellent contacts for personnel. Many are searching for work.

TD wants workers to feel responsible for their own work performance. He is thinking about talking to them each work to discuss the work situation and ask their opinions.

He asks RG about the idea of offering a special prize for the person who achieves the most production each week. That way he believes they can identify the most valuable workers. He wants them to feel at ease with the production managers. So he figures having them use a first name basis with the managers. If any problem comes up he wants to identiby the persons responsible and speak clearly with them to figure out a solution together.

RG believes each employee needs clear direction coming directly from the managers. He wants to explain to the workers exactly what is expected. He thinks that group recognition for success helps to encourage all to improve. If a problem arises he believes the managers need to offer various solutions to the workers. He believes respect for authority as managers is key to the worker / manager relationship. With mutual respect comes success for all.

8 Management Critical Incident Analysis

Tom Davis, a North American, is talking to Ramón García, a Mexican, about the adminstrative structure for a new Tijuana branch to assemble television sets for sale in the United States.

TD wants the best workers for a reasonable price. He wants to motivate them to work rapidly yet maintain quality.

RG has read his reports and knows TD is an excellent production manager. He expresses his willingness to work with TD.

TD wants to find the workers and offer an appropriate salary for the area.

RG tells about his colleagues in the city who have excellent contacts for personnel. Many are searching for work.

TD wants workers to feel responsible for their own work performance. He is thinking about talking to them each work to discuss the work situation and ask their opinions.

He asks RG about the idea of offering a special prize for the person who achieves the most production each week. That way he believes they can identify the most valuable workers. He wants them to feel at ease with the production managers. So he figures having them use a first name basis with the managers. If any problem comes up he wants to identiby the persons responsible and speak clearly with them to figure out a solution together.

RG believes each employee needs clear direction coming directly from the managers. He wants to explain to the workers exactly what is expected. He thinks that group recognition for success helps to encourage all to improve. If a problem arises he believes the managers need to offer various solutions to the workers. He believes respect for authority as managers is key to the worker / manager relationship. With mutual respect comes success for all.

Unit 9A Banking Critical Incident

A tourist goes into a bank in Guatemala to exchange dollars for quetzàles, the Guatemalan currency. She waits in a long line but when she reaches the window, the teller informs her that she needs to go to a different window.

The teller at the next window has her wait while he talks to another customer about family and friends. After she finishes the paperwork with the teller she has to go to another to the main cashier where she receives her money.

She finds the process very confusing and inefficient. She wonders how they can successfully do business in such a way.

Unit 9B Banking Critical Incident

A commercial bank representative from the United States is investigating a company in Honduras to determine whether to invest capital in their company. He wishes to find out their financial status – assets and liabilities, cash flow, earnings.

The Honduran vice president of finances at the company says they are very pleased to have the visit. They hope to have an opportunity to become better acquainted. He wishes to show the United States visitor around their plant, all with the most modern facilities. Later he plans to take him to meet some of their distributors.

The bank representative asks to see the company financial books and statements for the past several years. He says to the Honduran Director that he does not believe this should pose a problem.

The Honduran Director responds that he will take him to meet the vice president at the local bank where they have received their loans in the past, but because this time they need more for their expansion project than the local bank can offer them. He shows him a recent magazine article telling about their great success and their size. He believes this information should be sufficient for the bank representative to make the loan to them.

The bank representative explains they always prefer more concrete financial information.

Unit 10A Office Critical Incident

A new branch of International Bank is opening in a San Antonio, Texas suburb. Two managers, Tom Davis y Raúl López, are planning the office.

TD talks of portable walls to divide up the office space and a computer network for all information and transactions. He talks about an automatic teller so clients can complete transactions any time day and night. He suggests an automatic phone message system to provide clients information about their accounts and current savings and loan rates.

Using the computer system they can automatically print and send a complete monthly report to all clients on all their accounts and transactions.

He thinks they should divide responsibility for transactions among employees so that each knows procedures best for the areas assigned and take responsibility if a problem should occur.

RL says that such a plan is a possibility. He mentions that other types of office organization exist as well. Since their goal is to build community confidence in their bank, they should begin by publishing special offers for deposits and by telling about the services of a personal banker with whom they can discuss their financial needs. Each client would receive the name and phone number of a personal bank representative, so that whenever thes clients might need information they would know the person to contact.

For private conversations they could divide the space into small glassed in rooms for private conversations and the rest of the space open for regular transactions by employees at desks. In this way employees can discuss together and request help from others. Each personal representative would be responsible for all transactions for their clients.

TJ talks about the tellers and their function in receiving and giving money. During the busiest hours more teller windows need to open.

RL prefers to dispense cash at only one window, and that the others handle the paper work to maintain control and safekeeping of cash. To balance the days transactions is easier through one rather than all.

TD talks about training manuals and reports to track transactions.

RL talks about assigning persons to train in new employees for each area to explain and show them directly how to complete each process. He is thinking about weekly conferences in which all come together to exchange reports, to communicate changes, and to celebrate together successes. In this way all workers at the branch will feel a sense of unity in serving customers

Unit 10B Office Critical Incident

María Isabel Salázar the new sales manager at a furniture store. She is planning a meeting with all the sales clerks to go over their responsibilities and to encourage more sales. All are men who have been at the store for some time, so she wishes to establish her authority immediately with them.

MS tells them the purpose of the meeting is to increase sales by offering better service through extended weekend and evening hours for the store. She asks each person to sign up for three additional work hours per week on the schedule she is circulating. She says Tom has first pick because of his seniority and that he can hand it on to the next on the list by seniority.

Tom takes it and hands it on to the person next to him without signing.

MS continues talking to explain the clock recently installed so they can punch their arrival and departure times directly on their own time schedules. She plans to check to be sure of punctuality so they can better serve clients.

She says she is placing a receptionist an the entrance to direct clients to the furniture section of interes to them. By being in your section you can attend to each client right away.

At the end of each month she plans to post on the employees bulletin board a sales report showing the names of all clerks in order of sales and listing their percentage increase and decrease in comparison to the previous month.

The top person in sales for the month receives a double commission on sales. She asks if everything is clear. No one responds. She leaves and all start talking about her and what they think of the changes she has proposed.

Unit 11 Personnel and labor relations Critical Incident

Alicia Embacador gets together with her business partner Tom Jones to plan strategy in recruiting candidates for their new employment agency for international executives. They specialize in placing business executives from the United States in international business in Latin America and Latin American executives in the United States.

AE discusses using a survey to find out about experience, professional preparation, and personal qualifications of possible candidates.

TJ thinks it a good idea and suggests writing it in English. He feels it is easier to recruit candidates in the United States and they should have control of English. That way they can target business magazines and newspapers of interest to international clientele.

AE agrees but believes many good Spanish-speaking candidates in the United States also read business publications in Spanish which reach the entire Spanish-speaking world.By announcing in these they can recruit the best candidates from a larger base.

TJ thinks this broader reach in both English and Spanish publications for their announcement is an unnecessary expense. He thinks English is more important than Spanish for business and that those are the candidates they should try to reach.

AE agrees English is important but believes in certain situations Spanish is more important. She suggests that in addition to the announcement in publications they need to be in direct communication with persons they both know. This they can easily identify many potential candidates who already come with a reference to their international ability.

TJ responds that it is fine to accept friends and family members of persons they know, but to him this type of nepotism in the process is not very professional. He much prefers recruiting the best candidates through a national and international search process.

AE says that with such a process they will not know anything about the persons selected. By talking with persons they know and respect they can be confident to have better results. She believes they must place only the best candidates, so that their successful employment with bring them future business.

TJ wants to think about this matter. He asks if they need to consider other factors in the recruitment process.

They reach an agreement to put the announcement in publications of interest to persons in international business and in the best universities with postgraduate studies in international business. They plan to ask for applications through e-mail and fax. They would prefer references from current employees but they do not know if this might be a problem for candidates when they apply.

It seems the strategies of the two partners show major differences.

Ms. Paula Taylor (PT), production manager, goes from the home office in the United States to one of their factories in Guatemal to evaluate the clothing production process. She has an appointment with Licenciado Osvaldo Lara (OL) at eleven. She arrives punctually. Instead of waiting for OL to arrive PT decides to check out the production process in the factory.

She is surprised and a little perplexed because many women are not at their stations sewing. Several machines are not operating. Because PT does not know their work hours she decides to wait and find out from OL once he arrives.

Half an hour later OL comes. He greets PT and asks about her trip. While they are talking in his office he is attending to several matters. He calls in his secretary and gives her some papers he just signed.

PT says she wants to speak with him about the productivity level of the workers in the factory. She notes the machines idle at this time.

OL emphasizes the importance of maintaining high worker productivity. He talks about always meeting home office orders on time. They are there to serve and to respond to the main office.

PT says she cannot find the work schedule for the employees nor the time clock. She asks who has a break at this time and how many minutes break time they receive.

PT tells OL about efficiency experts who can help improve productivity at his factory.

OL responds that they have teams working together and deciding upon how best to reach production output, which works well for them. He says the workers have organized a party for her and asks her to come to it in the afternoon.

PT responds that she is trying to get to more factories to make her reports to the main office about which to continue and which to close. She does not believe her tight schedule allows for attending the party later that day. She asks to see the books for processing jobs, supply inventory levels, and production inventory levels.

OL says that the supervisors are in the process of writing their reports and that soon they will have this information available on paper for her.

PT asks him to fax it to her for inclusion in her report to the home office.

Unit 13A Marketing Critical Incident

Mr. Valdez, a Chilean grape grower, receives five cents a pound for grapes. They sell in the U.S. for $1.60 a pound. Someone put cyanide in some grapes exported to the U.S. When the customs inspectors found three contaminated grapes they blocked entrance of the fruit. News about cyanide found in Chilean grapes came out in the newspapers and television.

Explain the impact on all affected groups both in the United States and Chile. How can the Chileans prevent the prohibition?

Unit 13B Marketing Critical Incident

North Sez, a North American intern at Laboratorio Fármaco in Valparaíso, Chile, is meeting with his Chilean supervisor, Julia Montalva, Marketing Director, about production of a new capsule. She wants to know the opinions of the doctors and the pharmacists who are now using the product since the new capsule will contain 10% more medication and cost more.

JM wants NS to spend a few weeks in the provinces of Chile to find out their opinions. She wants him to talk directly to each person on their list and afterward to write a report with his findings.

NS expresses agreement with her request to find out their opinions about the product change. He suggests another plan to save time and money. He suggests that he can prepare a survey to send directly to each person on the list and to enclose samples of their newly changed product. That way each can complete and return the survey at their convenience. In two to three weeks he could call them by phone to tlak directly to them about their opinions. The written survey would make it easier for him to write a report. He says that he is swamped with work in the office and wants to get all necessary work done before the approaching Christmas holidays. He asks her opinion about his idea.

JM responds, "Well, it is another idea.

Explain:

the process each prefers, the effect of the month, the effect of each plan,

the conversation between a woman supervisor and her subordinate.

Continue the conversation until an acceptable resolution is reached.

Unit 13C Marketing Critical Incident

Rob Roy talks to his friend, Carla Cara a Cara, about his idea to sell compact disks over the Internet targeted to Latin American students.

He plans to offer popular songs on his Web site with a convenient button to e-mail requests by marking selections and sending a personal check or giving a credit card number. He explains that advanced technology provides safety checks on sending information over the net.

CC is not sure about mailing the disks out and whether he will actually receive payment. RR talks about a new opportunity and the saying "nothing ventured nothing gained".

CC thinks distribution of the disks will be a problem. They need to consider many factors including risks. She talks about good local markets in Latin American countries and that most a used to buying and browsing in local markets. She talks about street vendors who sell for cheap in the streets. She prefers these direct sales to distributors who can reach these vendors. Once they have sold the disks the responsibilities and risks pass to the new seller.

RR thinks the profits will go to the distributors or that the costs will go up. He thinks computer web site marketing and sales is more efficient. The buyar can go on line at any hour. He thinks the "open air" market is a thing of the past. That no one is going to stop to buy compact disks in the street. All prefer a greater independence and a more flexible schedule for purchases. It is cheaper not to use intermediaries in the sales process.

Unit 14A Finances Critical Incident

Janet Lee talks to Rafael Morales about sales to countries with hyperinflation. The two work in the same office and know all their clients well. Several clients have asked for 30 days to pay their invoices.JL and RM are searching for a way to extend the day credit to their valued customers without jeopardizing the value of their future payment.

JL says all their clients in Brazil and Argentina have requested credit of 2/10, net 30 days involving large invoices with long established customers.

RM says that a 10 day wait in payment is a risk, worse if they wait 30 days with the hyperinflation in these countries. He prefers cash payment before sending a shipment for requests.

JL says they have always given a discount and time for payment in the past. She wonders if there is a way to offer terms for payment and still guarantee payment for the actual value of the purchase.

RM suggests to ask them to pay in dollars but if their currency loses value in relation to the dollar their clients may have trouble selling the merchandise or paying the bill for the merchandise they purchase.

JL says it seems there is no solution to the situation.

Can you suggest alternatives?

Unit 14 B Finances Critical Incident

Patty Johnson (PJ), a young woman from the United States, is working for an multinational corporation in Montevideo, Uruguay. Because she is an efficient and dedicated worker she often receives extra assignments to complete. Recently PJ has worked ten hour days six days a week to keep up. Her managers have given her raises based upon her excellent performance. As a result she was able to furnish her apartment and has started to make early payment on her student loans.

One afternoon three work colleagues invite her to go out with them after work that day. They tell her she needs to relax more and work less.

She responds, "My boss asked me to finish this very important report for him today and I promised I would before I left. I do not know how long it will take. Thanks for the invitation. Next time I assure you I will plan to go with you.

Her colleagues do not understand why she is always working. They think to themselves that they will not bother to invite her in the future.

Unit 14C Finances Critical Incident

A decision about a new factory

The Farmall Company manufactures and sells agricultural machinery to the Southern Cone countries of South America-- Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Bolivia, and Chile. Their central office is in Atlanta, Georgia with manufacturing plants in Georgia and Kansas.

The top managers have talked about a factory and distribution center in one of these countries to serve the entire region.

They are in the process of analyzing the situation. At this time the exchange rate is favorable for their export products to the countries. Two reasons why they are thinking about a factory there are to reduce labor costs in production and to reduce transportation costs, which have steadily increased in the last two years.

A managerial team wishes to receive advice about aspects to consider before their final decision for the facility. They have requested advice from Latin American and North American experts in plant development for the area. You are among the experts.

Instructions: For one of the countries give advantages and disadvantages affecting the final decision. Include political situation, inflation, production, labor, transportation, and legal matters. Other factors to mention are unions, monetary stability and the labor force.

What is your recommendation about a plant in the country and why?

15 Import / Export Critical Incident

Dominican Coffee

Richard McCoy, wholesaler, imports coffee directly from the Dominican Republic for resale to restaurants and coffee shops. He is worried because his last order has not arrived. He calls Aurelio Buendía, his Dominican supplier, to find out what happened.

AB responds that he was just about to call. Because of the hurricane roads and bridges washed out and areas flooded. All their coffee supply was lost when the road washed out and took the truck as well.

RM explains he does not have enough coffee to meet his customer orders and that he is in urgent need of a shipment.

AB says in a couple of months after the road is repaired he can send him his order. No other road goes out to the plantation and connects to the port.

AB thanks RM for paying in advance and that he used the money to settle debts on his accounts payable.

RM tells him he must have the coffee right away. If Ab cannot send the coffee, RM says that AB needs to return the money so he can find another supplier for coffee.

AB says unfortunately he is not able to return the money, but not to worry. Within two months, once all is back to normal, RM will indeed receive the coffee. He has always served RM's coffee needs well in the past and he will continue serving RM well in the future.

RM shouts, "What do you mean not worry? I am in danger of losing my customers to other wholesalers. Then I won't have a business. What can I do?"

Brake, T. *Doing Business Internationally: Cross-Cultural Challenges Resource Book*. Princeton, N.J.: Training Management Corp., 1995.
Profiles by region on business, social etiquette, country.

Brake, T. *Doing Business Internationally: The Workbook to Cross-Cultural Success.* Princeton, N.J.: Training Management, 1995.

Brislin, Richard. *Intercultural Interactions: A Practical Guide.* Vol 9. Cross-Cultural Research & Methodology Series. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1986.

Fisher, Glen. *International Negotiation.* Intercultural Press, 1980.
Cross-cultural perspective on negotiation—players, situation, decision-making style, "national character", coping with cross-cultures, trusting interpreters & translators.

Kluckhohn, Florence & F. L. Strodtbeck. *Variations in Value Orientations.* Evanston, IL: Row, 1961

Lee, James. "Cultural Analysis in Overseas Operations", *Harvard Business Review* 44 (March-April '66) 106-114

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

REPRODUCTION RELEASE
(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: BUILDING CROSS-CULTURAL BRIDGES: CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL INCIDENTS	
Author(s): Caroline White, Associate Professor of Spanish, College of St Catherine	
Corporate Source: Address 2004 Randolph Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105	Publication Date: 2000

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

☒

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) *and* paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

☐

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

☐

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only.

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but neither box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic/optical media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here please

Signature: Caroline White Caroline White	Printed Name/Position/Title: Associate Prof Spanish
Organization/Address: Mail # 4260, 2004 Randolph Avenue, St Paul MN 55105	Telephone: 651 690 6821 FAX:
	E-Mail Address: cawhite @ stkate.edu Date: 01 May 02

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or , if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS).

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price Per Copy:
Quantity Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant a reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V.WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

You can send this form and your document to the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, which will forward your materials to the appropriate ERIC Clearinghouse.

Acquisitions Coordinator
ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguisitics
4646 40th Street NW
Washington, DC 20016-1859

(800) 276-9834/ (202) 362-0700
e-mail: eric@cal.org